

SLATER SIGNALS

The Newsletter of the USS SLATER's Volunteers
By Timothy C. Rizzuto, Executive Director

Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

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On the third Saturday in June, we celebrate **Destroyer Escort Day**. It's on this day that we remember the 1,316 men lost while serving aboard Destroyer Escorts. We also celebrate all DEs, their sailors, and the accomplishments they made during WWII and in the post war years. Slater Volunteer, **Ken Kaskoun**, worked with the **St. Pious Boy Scout Troop 1078** to present the colors. We also featured the **Pitch Hitters Quartet**, of Racing City Chorus, to sing the National Anthem.

Our Board Chairman, **BJ Costello**, served as emcee. Board President, **Tony Esposito**, delivered the Invocation and Benediction. Then Board Trustee, **Steve Long**, shared the History of DE Day with us. Albany Mayor, **Kathy Sheehan**, Albany



Ken Kaskoun supervises as Boy Scout Troop 1078 presents the colors.



The National Anthem was performed by the Pitch Hitters Quartet of Racing City Chorus.

County Executive, **Dan McCoy**, and State Assembly Member, **Phil Steck**, were all in attendance, and said a few words about the importance of honoring veterans and saving history.

As **Steve Long** read the names of each **DE lost**, we rang the ship's bell, and tossed a carnation into the Hudson in their honor. Intern, **John Epp**, rang the bell. Tossing the carnations was done by the granddaughter of a USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS sailor, **Susan Aquino**. As well as **Mike Marko**, a SLATER tour guide who served aboard USS PETERSON and

USS BROUGH, **Bill Scharoun**, a former tour guide who served aboard USS OSMUS, and **Ted Urbanski**, a volunteer who has been teaching Semaphore and Morse Code to our visitors and served aboard USS VAN VOORHIS. **Steve Stella** was on hand to play taps.

On the observation deck, we had over 45 people in attendance, 15 photos of DEs with quotes from sailors, and the Roll of Honor posted that lists the 1,316 sailors who lost their lives. The day was a great success and was the perfect way to welcome back being able to host ceremonies once again.

This month our tour guides are starting to feel like we are actually getting back to normal! New York State lifted our mask mandate for all vaccinated people, so our guides can now tell their sea stories and describe the ship, unincumbered by a mask blocking their face. Our visitors seem to be grateful for it too. The number of visitors is creeping up to higher numbers, and the temperature is joining them.



Shanna briefs Bill Scharoun, Ted Urbanski, and Mike Marko on their role in the DE Day ceremony.



Tour guides Charles, Cece, Xavier, Fred, and Chan stand ready for the first tour.

Returning to Wednesdays this year are tour guides, Mike Marko, Bob Wheelock, Alan Fox, Greg Healey, and Greg Bischoff. And new to Wednesdays this season is **Paul Guarnieri**, who, after starting a new job, can't make it down on Saturdays anymore.

Thursdays are filled with Carl Camurati, Richard Wallace, and new volunteer, Tom Corigliano. While on Fridays, you can find **Herb Marlow, Ken Kaskoun, and Charles Starks.**

The stars of Saturdays at SLATER are Charles Starks, again, as he pulls double duty, Fred Sirois, Scott Clayton, and new volunteer, Paul



Fred Sirois explains the function of the depth charge projectors.

Guallini. The week rounds out with the Sunday Funday Crew, **Art Dott, Grant Hack, Bill Goralski, and Chris Soulia.**

Each tour day the crew is augmented with our college interns. Our granddaddy of guides, returning for his fifth season, is **Austin.** In their third seasons, **Liam, Cassidy, Christian, and John** work both as tour guides and as Duty Officers inside the Ship's Store. Returning after a very short 2020 season are both **Sarah and Xavier,** and new hires for our 2021 season are **Chan and Cece.**

These volunteers and interns are the backbone of keeping SLATER afloat, figuratively. While the maintenance volunteers take care of it physically, without our guides and their interpretation of the ship and its history to the public, there would be no income. The ship would

not be here today. We rely so much on the public to support us with ticket and merchandise sales, donations, and recommending us to their friends and families. It is essential that our tour guides facilitate the relationships we build with our visitors.

We released our second episode of our podcast, "DE Classified", this month. Liam has brought you the history of USS MITCHELL DE-43. MITCHELL was an Evarts Class Destroyer Escort. She served in the Pacific Theatre of WWII and earned herself an impressive 9 Battle Stars! In this episode of DE Classified, you'll hear about MITCHELL'S time in the Pacific Fleet, how Pollywogs became Shellbacks, and how Ulithi Atoll became a sailor's home away from home while in port.



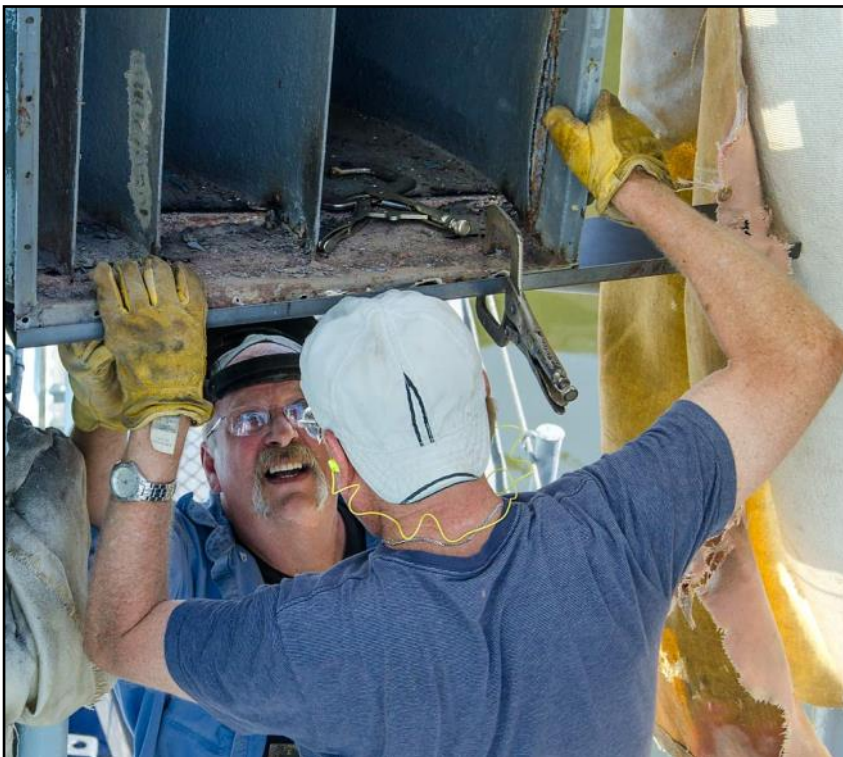
Our second podcast about the USS MITCHELL went online this month.

The annual historic ships radio weekend was June 5th and 6th. Our operators were **Chuck Chandler** (WS1L), **Steve Syrotynski** (W2TRH), **Rich Guthrie** (KA2JKA), and **Dave Smith** (WA2WAP). They all worked the radio shack, and probably made the most contacts we've ever made on a radio weekend. For the weekend, WW2DEM worked 157 contacts, using frequencies from 3.885 to 146.94 MHz. They used AM, single sideband, Morse Code, and FM. They contacted 29 states, 2 Canadian provinces, and 2 overseas countries: The Canary Islands and Slovenia.

On the Maritime side they worked one schooner (**TICONDEROGA**), one fishing vessel (**F/V CLAUD SOMERS**), one lightship (**L/S HURON**), two heavy cruisers (**CA's USS SALEM**, and the permanent memorial for the **USS INDIANAPOLIS Memorial station**),



The radio gang made a record number of contacts during the historic ships radio weekend.



Joe Zygmunt and Bob Lally made repairs to the forward supply fan intake.

three battleships (**NORTH CAROLINA, WISCONSIN, and NEW JERSEY**) and two carriers (**LEXINGTON and YORKTOWN.**) We also worked the museum of the Voice of America in Ohio. Chuck now has a pile of QSL cards to send out. For the record, we add everyone we contact to the mailing list for a year. This way they get the newsletter, in the hope they will become **USS SLATER** supporters and donate. Many thanks to all who participated!

Ed Zajkowski came through again, with his crew of five volunteers from the Philadelphia Electric Company's Limerick Nuclear Power station, in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Ed was

joined by **Joe Zygmunt, Rick Espenshade, Bob Lally, Steve Wulko, and Joe Arra**, who were all PECO retirees. They were joined by **George Gollas, Bill Maloney**, and most importantly, cook **Blair Sandri**. **Doug Tanner** arranged for **Petrochem** to loan us an extra welding machine, and the crew went to work.



Rick Espenshade and Steve Wulko patching holes in the deck.

Over the course of two days, they patched three holes in the decks, two over officer's country and one over the radio shack. They cut away two sections of wasted metal on the forward supply vent fan intake and fitted in new metal. Next, they fabricated a missing spent cartridge chute on 40mm gun 41. Then they freed up and lubricated both 24" searchlights, so they rotate again.

They also rebuilt the water drain line under three-inch gun 33. **George Gollas** got the elevation handwheel on the aft 40mm gun reassembled, following **George Christophersen's** shop repair. George G. continued his work on the interior communication call systems. **Bill**

Maloney stood fire watch, and photo documented all the work. **Blair** continued his tradition of serving outstanding meals to everyone, and Ed made sure that the whole crew got a whaleboat ride. The big downside was that the three hottest days of the month coincided with their work party, making life pretty miserable for all concerned. We can't thank them enough for their effort.



We got the whaleboat back just in time for Ed's work party. **Tommy Moore** had it newly and shipshape, and we are indebted to the crew at **Scarano's Boatyard**, who took extra care in giving it time to swell up. **Larry**

I'll take one of everything. Blair Sandri presides over his galley. Note the time on the galley clock. 0600.

Williams, Mike Dingmon, and Thomas Scian brought it up from the yard on Tuesday, 1 June. They made the trip with no leaks or engine trouble, and the boat now rests in its proper place, alongside the accommodation ladder.

All the while Ed's gang was suffering in the heat in Albany, Gary Dieckman and Stave Klauck had it worse in Philadelphia. The Navy held an open house for parts stripping on several PERRY class frigates that are due to be scrapped. It was hotter aboard those dead ships with no ventilation than it was in Albany.



Our crew is ready to exercise the whaleboat.

They arrived at the Philadelphia Navy Yard during the brutal heat wave of June 7, to participate in the yard's Open House. This is an opportunity for volunteers, from selected museum ships, to get to scavenge for parts from naval vessels destined for the scrapper's torch. **Steve Klauck's** van was barely large enough for the haul of parts from former USS JOHN L. HALL FFG-32, USS UNDERWOOD FFG-36, and USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS FFG-58. It was surprising how much electrical gear, dating from the WWII era, was still in use on these ships all built in the 1980's.



Frigates in Philadelphia destined for the scrapyard.

Undeterred by inside temperatures topping 100°, the Slater gang secured windshield wiper motors, an assortment of electrical relays, electric panel knobs and handles, call buttons and buzzers, sound-powered phone parts, 1MC parts, and ship's entertainment speaker parts, fuses, and a red-light globe. The largest item came to us courtesy of our friends from USS NEW JERSEY, who located a 75-foot power cable we were looking for. Our boys reciprocated by presenting

the New Jerseyans with the grounding strap they were seeking. Despite the exhausting heat and heavy lifting, the general attitude among our guys was, "Sign me up for the next one."

Doug's local gang made progress on the next watertight door. Tim Benner, Warren Brozio, Dave Mardon, Chuck Teal, Earl Herchenroder, and Danny Statile continued working on corroded watertight doors and ammunition boxes. We got a shipment of watertight door gasket material and dog clips from an outfit in California, so now the shipfitters have all the material they need to finish the doors on the 02 level, around the pilothouse. Also, the 20mm ammo box is coming together, as well as the clips on the radio room watertight door dogs.



The deck gang hauls the watertight door up to the 02 level.

Danny has become an expert at making the retaining brackets for the ready service locker lids, so they will stay open and not fall shut on somebody's fingers. We're working on a detail project, to put the magazine temperature card holders and thermometers in the display ready service lockers. To further that project along, **Stuart Scace** did a beautiful job of fabricating the thermometer holders. We're working up the cards now and have received thermometers that look very close to the Navy originals.



Doug and Warren check out the condition of the amidships 20mm ready service lockers.

Our father and son team, Richard and Henry Burgeois, are well along on finishing up the missing auxiliary steam piping, in the aft motor room. They have become quite adept at wrapping and

insulating piping. They've put a first coat of paint on the intermittent line. After it gets the second coat, they will finish painting the constant steam line that goes up and over the aft bulkhead door, and behind the switchgear. Then, they just have to correctly stencil it, and we're a step closer to perfection.

They are also working with Barry Witte, to replace missing steam and condensate piping in officer's country. This will be a winter project, when we are closed to the public, as all of this work is on the tour route. But they are in the process of planning and prefabricating parts.



Grant Eastman removing parts for us in Philadelphia.

Ensign, Jack Carbone, has been working with Barry on restoration of the three-inch practice loading machine. Ian Caneto is working on small valve detail up forward. All of this work is supported by our local volunteer machinist, **Alex Titcomb.** Our offsite machinist in Connecticut, **George Christophersen,** fabricated handles for the magazine flood valves, before going in for a knee replacement.



NYS Police Dive team came to the ship to practice!

New York State Police Divers came and trained. Their annual training day aboard SLATER was well attended by at least 30 divers, and they took the opportunity to take a look at the hull for us while they were down there.

Two of our members, Bill Flitcraft and Glenn Raymo, reminded me that we haven't been exploiting a funding source to its full potential. In case you weren't aware, we are set up with Amazon Smile as one of the charities you can select to receive a donation from them. Bill reminded me that he had set his Amazon account up years ago, so that he only orders from Smile. It is a painless way to support USS SLATER. He also reminded me that now is a good time to remind and inform you readers how the program works, since on-line buying is at an all-

time high due to Covid. We suspect it will remain elevated even after we return to "normal." So don't forget Amazon Smile and the **USS SLATER (Destroyer Escort Historical Museum)**.

Finally, I've often said that if they didn't need it in 1945, I shouldn't need it today. But the Internet threw that theory out the window. The Internet is kind of like air, water, and electricity. There is a tendency to take it for granted. You don't realize how dependent you are on it, until you don't have it. To that end, we owe a great debt to **Carl and Dawn Legere of Empire Tech.** Carl upgraded all of our computer systems, and then transitioned from Vendor to volunteer when he made sure we had Wi-Fi in the shipyard. I didn't even know what a Wi-Fi hotspot was, but Carl kept us in communication for the journey to Staten Island and back and saved us the 200-yard trek to the office we had to make in 2014 every time we wanted to check email. His wife, **Dawn**, introduced us to the perils of cybercrime. We promptly went out and bought cybercrime insurance protection, and I've been afraid to log into to our bank accounts with Wi-Fi ever since. We thank them both for helping bring this dinosaur into the 21st century.

See you next month!

Tim



Hello from the Hudson River!